



Texas Department of Insurance

Division of Workers' Compensation

Medical Fee Dispute Resolution, MS-48

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MEDICAL FEE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FINDINGS AND DECISION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Requestor Name and Address

AHC ON BEHALF OF
UHS MCALLEN MEDICAL CENTER
10002 BATTLEVIEW PARKWAY
MANASSAS VA 20109

Carrier's Austin Representative Box

54

Respondent Name

TEXAS MUTUAL INSURANCE CO

MFDR Date Received

JUNE 19, 2008

MFDR Tracking Number

M4-08-6286-01

REQUESTOR'S POSITION SUMMARY

Requestor's Position Summary Dated June 18, 2008: "Please be advised that AHC has been retained by McAllen Medical Center, regarding the above referenced claim. Risk Management has incorrectly processed this claim based on Rule 134.401(c)(6)---Stop-Loss Reimbursement." "Interpretation of the Language in the Rule 134.401(c)(6) addresses the requirements for stop-loss reimbursement. The Rule was 'established to ensure fair and reasonable compensation to the hospital for unusually costly services rendered ruing treatment to an injured worker.' It clearly states that were requirements are met, the application of the stop-loss rate is to be used in place of the usual per diem based reimbursement method. In other words, if audited charges exceed the stop loss threshold of \$40,000, reimbursement for the entire admissions should be at a rate of 75% of audited charges, not at the standard per diem amount." "In recent months, a Travis County District Court ruling...supports the hospital's position on Rule 134.401(c)(6)---Stop-Loss Reimbursement. The court ordered, in part, that the Acute Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline 'requires only that a provider prove that its total audited charges exceed \$40,000 in order for the stop-loss reimbursement methodology to apply; there is no additional requirement that a provider proves that the admission was unusually costly, or unusually extensive in order for the stop-loss reimbursement methodology to apply.' The court also found that 'a carrier is not authorized to reduce the provider's usual and customary charges for implantables, orthotics and prosthetics to cost plus 10% in determining whether the stop-loss reimbursement methodology applies or for reimbursement purposes'." "Based on the Stop Loss equation under Rule 134.401(c)(6), we pray for an additional payment of \$87,910.35."

Amount in Dispute: \$87,910.35

RESPONDENT'S POSITION SUMMARY

Respondent's Position Summary Dated July 11, 2008: "Texas Mutual audited the bill, concluded it did not meet either stop loss exception criteria, and reimbursed the requestor through the per diem method."

Response Submitted by: Texas Mutual Insurance Co., 6210 E. Hwy 290, Austin, Texas 78723

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

| Disputed Dates | Disputed Services | Amount In Dispute | Amount Due |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| September 6, 2007 through September 10, 2007 | Inpatient Hospital Services | \$87,910.35 | \$223.44 |

FINDINGS AND DECISION

This medical fee dispute is decided pursuant to Texas Labor Code §413.031 and all applicable, adopted rules of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation.

Background

1. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.305 and §133.307, 33 *Texas Register* 3954, applicable to requests filed on or after May 25, 2008, sets out the procedures for resolving medical fee disputes.
2. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401, 22 *Texas Register* 6264, effective August 1, 1997, sets out the fee guidelines for inpatient services rendered in an acute care hospital.
3. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.1, 31 *Texas Register* 3561, effective May 2, 2006, sets out the guidelines for a fair and reasonable amount of reimbursement in the absence of a contract or an applicable division fee guideline.
4. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.600, requires preauthorization for specific treatments and services.

The services in dispute were reduced/denied by the respondent with the following reason codes:

Explanation of Benefits

- CAC- W1-Workers Compensation state fee schedule adjustment.
- CAC-W10-No maximum allowable defined by fee guideline. Reimbursement made based on insurance carrier fair and reasonable reimbursement methodology.
- CAC-W4-No additional reimbursement allowed after review of appeal/reconsideration.
- CAC-143-Portion of payment deferred.
- CAC-97-Payment is included in the allowance for another service/procedure.
- 420-Supplemental payment.
- CAC-62-Payment denied/reduced for absence of, or exceeded pre-certification/authorization.
- 480-Reimbursement based on the Acute Care Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline per diem rate allowances.
- 711-Length of stay exceeds number of days previously preauthorized. Documentation does not support medical necessity for additional days.
- 719-Reimbursed at carrier's fair & reasonable; cost data unavailable for facility. Additional payment may be considered if data submitted.
- 730-Denied as included in per diem rate.
- 891-The insurance company is reducing or denying payment after reconsideration.

Issues

1. Does the documentation support that a preauthorization issue exists in this dispute?
2. Did the audited charges exceed \$40,000.00?
3. Did the admission in dispute involve unusually extensive services?
4. Did the admission in dispute involve unusually costly services?
5. Is the requestor entitled to additional reimbursement?

Findings

This dispute relates to inpatient surgical services provided in a hospital setting with reimbursement subject to the provisions of Division rule at 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401, titled *Acute Care Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline*, effective August 1, 1997, 22 *Texas Register* 6264. The Third Court of Appeals' November 13, 2008 opinion in *Texas Mutual Insurance Company v. Vista Community Medical Center, LLP*, 275 *South Western Reporter Third* 538, 550 (Texas Appeals – Austin 2008, petition denied) addressed a challenge to the interpretation of 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401. The Court concluded that "to be eligible for reimbursement under the Stop-Loss Exception, a hospital must demonstrate that the total audited charges

exceed \$40,000 and that an admission involved unusually costly and unusually extensive services.” Both the requestor and respondent in this case were notified via form letter that the mandate for the decision cited above was issued on January 19, 2011. Each was given the opportunity to supplement their original MDR submission, position or response as applicable. The documentation filed by the requestor and respondent to date will be considered in determining whether the admission in dispute is eligible for reimbursement under the stop-loss method of payment. Consistent with the Third Court of Appeals’ November 13, 2008 opinion, the division will address whether the total audited charges **in this case** exceed \$40,000; whether the admission and disputed services **in this case** are unusually extensive; and whether the admission and disputed services **in this case** are unusually costly. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(2)(C) states, in pertinent part, that “Independent reimbursement is allowed on a case-by-case basis if the particular case exceeds the stop-loss threshold as described in paragraph (6) of this subsection...” 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6) puts forth the requirements to meet the three factors that will be discussed.

1. According to the explanation of benefits, the respondent denied/reduced reimbursement based upon reason code “CAC-62-Payment denied/reduced for absence of, or exceeded pre-certification/authorization”, and “711- Length of stay exceeds number of days previously preauthorized. Documentation does not support medical necessity for additional days”.

28 Texas Administrative Code §134.600(q)(1) states “The health care requiring concurrent review for an extension for previously approved services includes: (1) inpatient length of stay.”

The respondent did not submit a copy of the preauthorization report to support the denial.

A review of the submitted explanation of benefits finds that payment was issued; the respondent's position summary did not address this basis for denial. The Division concludes that the submitted documentation does not support that a preauthorization issue exists; therefore, the disputed services will be reviewed per applicable Division rules and guidelines.

2. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6)(A)(i) states “...to be eligible for stop-loss payment the total audited charges for a hospital admission must exceed \$40,000, the minimum stop-loss threshold.” Furthermore, (A) (v) of that same section states “...Audited charges are those charges which remain after a bill review by the insurance carrier has been performed...” Review of the explanation of benefits issued by the carrier finds that the carrier did not deduct any charges in accordance with §134.401(c)(6)(A)(v); therefore the audited charges equal \$130,485.00. The Division concludes that the total audited charges exceed \$40,000.
3. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(2)(C) allows for payment under the stop-loss exception on a case-by-case basis only if the particular case exceeds the stop-loss threshold as described in paragraph (6). Paragraph (6)(A)(ii) states that “This stop-loss threshold is established to ensure compensation for unusually extensive services required during an admission.” The Third Court of Appeals’ November 13, 2008 opinion states that “to be eligible for reimbursement under the Stop-Loss Exception, a hospital must demonstrate that the total audited charges exceed \$40,000 and that an admission involved unusually costly and unusually extensive services” and further states that “...independent reimbursement under the Stop-Loss Exception was meant to apply on a case-by-case basis in relatively few cases.” The requestor in its original position statement states that “...if audited charges exceed the stop loss threshold of \$40,000, reimbursement for the entire admissions should be at a rate of 75% of audited charges, not at the standard per diem amount.” This statement does not meet the requirements of 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(2)(C) because the requestor presumes that the disputed services meet Stop-Loss, thereby presuming that the admission was unusually extensive. The division concludes that the requestor failed to meet the requirements of 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(2)(C).
4. 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6) states that “Stop-loss is an independent reimbursement methodology established to ensure fair and reasonable compensation to the hospital for unusually costly services rendered during treatment to an injured worker.” The Third Court of Appeals’ November 13, 2008 opinion concluded that in order to be eligible for reimbursement under the stop-loss exception, a hospital must demonstrate that an admission involved unusually costly services. The requestor’s position statement does not address how this inpatient admission was unusually costly. The requestor does not provide a reasonable comparison between the cost associated with this admission when compared to similar spinal surgery services or admissions, thereby failing to demonstrate that the admission in dispute was unusually costly. The division concludes that the requestor failed to meet the requirements of 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(6).
5. For the reasons stated above the services in dispute are not eligible for the stop-loss method of reimbursement. Consequently, reimbursement shall be calculated pursuant to 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(1) titled *Standard Per Diem Amount* and §134.401(c)(4) titled *Additional Reimbursements*. The Division notes that additional reimbursements under §134.401(c)(4) apply only to bills that do not reach the

stop-loss threshold described in subsection (c)(6) of this section.

- Division rule at 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(3)(ii) states, in pertinent part, that “The applicable Workers' Compensation Standard Per Diem Amount (SPDA) is multiplied by the length of stay (LOS) for admission...” Review of the submitted documentation finds that the length of stay for this admission was three surgical days and one ICU/CCU; therefore the standard per diem amounts of \$1,118.00 and \$1,560.00 apply respectively. The per diem rates multiplied by the allowable days result in a total allowable amount of \$4,914.00.
- 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(4)(A), states “When medically necessary the following services indicated by revenue codes shall be reimbursed at cost to the hospital plus 10%: (i) Implantables (revenue codes 275, 276, and 278), and (ii) Orthotics and prosthetics (revenue code 274).”
- A review of the submitted medical bill indicates that the requestor billed revenue code 278 for Implants at \$13,857.00.
- The Division finds the total allowable for the implants billed under revenue code 278 is:

| Description of Implant per Itemized Statement | Quantity | Cost Invoice | Cost + 10% |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|--------------|------------|
| Screw | 3 | \$430.00 | \$1,419.00 |
| Cervical Plate | 1 | \$1,310.00 | \$1,441.00 |
| Lifenet VG2 Cerv Ctrap | 2 | \$1,097.00 | \$2,413.40 |
| TOTAL | 6 | | \$5,273.40 |

- 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(4)(C) states “Pharmaceuticals administered during the admission and greater than \$250 charged per dose shall be reimbursed at cost to the hospital plus 10%. Dose is the amount of a drug or other substance to be administered at one time.” The requestor billed \$327.00/unit for Thrombin 5000 unit vial. The requestor did not submit documentation to support what the cost to the hospital was for these items billed under revenue code 250. For that reason, additional reimbursement for these items cannot be recommended.

The division concludes that the total allowable for this admission is \$10,187.40. The respondent issued payment per the submitted explanation of benefits in the amount of \$9,963.96. Based upon the documentation submitted, additional reimbursement in the amount of \$223.44 is recommended.

Conclusion

The submitted documentation does not support the reimbursement amount sought by the requestor. The requestor in this case demonstrated that the audited charges exceed \$40,000, but failed to demonstrate that the disputed inpatient hospital admission involved unusually extensive services, and failed to demonstrate that the services in dispute were unusually costly. Consequently, 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.401(c)(1) titled *Standard Per Diem Amount*, and §134.401(c)(4) titled *Additional Reimbursements* are applied and result in additional reimbursement .

ORDER

Based upon the documentation submitted by the parties and in accordance with the provisions of Texas Labor Code Sections 413.031 and 413.019 (if applicable), the Division has determined that the requestor is entitled to additional reimbursement for the services involved in this dispute. The Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to remit to the requestor the amount of \$223.44 plus applicable accrued interest per 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.803, due within 30 days of receipt of this Order.

Authorized Signature

Signature

Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Officer

11/8/2012

Date

YOUR RIGHT TO APPEAL

Either party to this medical fee dispute may appeal this decision by requesting a contested case hearing. A completed **Request for a Medical Contested Case Hearing** (form **DWC045A**) must be received by the DWC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **twenty** days of your receipt of this decision. A request for hearing should be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings, Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers Compensation, P.O. Box 17787, Austin, Texas, 78744. The party seeking review of the MDR decision shall deliver a copy of the request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute at the same time the request is filed with the Division. **Please include a copy of the *Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Findings and Decision* together with any other required information specified in 28 Texas Administrative Code §148.3(c), including a **certificate of service demonstrating that the request has been sent to the other party.****

Si prefiere hablar con una persona en español acerca de ésta correspondencia, favor de llamar a 512-804-4812.